

**CORPORATIONS USED TO AVOID
INCOME TAX ON SHAREHOLDERS**

CORPORATIONS IMPROPERLY
ACCUMULATING SURPLUS

§ 1.531-1 Imposition of tax.

Section 531 imposes (in addition to the other taxes imposed upon corporations by chapter 1 of the Code) a graduated tax on the accumulated taxable income of every corporation described in section 532 and § 1.532-1. In the case of an affiliated group which makes or is required to make a consolidated return see § 1.1502-43. All of the taxes on corporations under chapter 1 of the Code are treated as one tax for purposes of assessment, collection, payment, period of limitations, etc. See section 535 and §§ 1.535-1, 1.535-2, and 1.535-3 for the definition and determination of accumulated taxable income.

(Secs. 1502 and 7805 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (68A Stat. 637, 917; 26 U.S.C. 1502, 7805))

[T.D. 6500, 25 FR 11737, Nov. 26, 1960, as amended by T.D. 7244, 37 FR 28897, Dec. 30, 1972; T.D. 7937, 49 FR 3462, Jan. 27, 1984]

§ 1.532-1 Corporations subject to accumulated earnings tax.

(a) *General rule.* (1) The tax imposed by section 531 applies to any domestic or foreign corporation (not specifically excepted under section 532(b) and paragraph (b) of this section) formed or availed of to avoid or prevent the imposition of the individual income tax on its shareholders, or on the shareholders of any other corporation, by permitting earnings and profits to accumulate instead of dividing or distributing them. See section 533 and § 1.533-1, relating to evidence of purpose to avoid income tax with respect to shareholders.

(2) The tax imposed by section 531 may apply if the avoidance is accomplished through the formation or use of one corporation or a chain of corporations. For example, if the capital stock of the M Corporation is held by the N Corporation, the earnings and profits of the M Corporation would not be returned as income subject to the individual income tax until such earnings and profits of the M Corporation were

distributed to the N Corporation and distributed in turn by the N Corporation to its shareholders. If either the M Corporation or the N Corporation was formed or is availed of for the purpose of avoiding or preventing the imposition of the individual income tax upon the shareholders of the N Corporation, the accumulated taxable income of the corporation so formed or availed of (M or N, as the case may be) is subject to the tax imposed by section 531.

(b) *Exceptions.* The accumulated earnings tax imposed by section 531 does not apply to a personal holding company (as defined in section 542), to a foreign personal holding company (as defined in section 552), or to a corporation exempt from tax under subchapter F, chapter 1 of the Code.

(c) *Foreign corporations.* Section 531 is applicable to any foreign corporation, whether resident or nonresident, with respect to any income derived from sources, within the United States, if any of its shareholders are subject to income tax on the distributions of the corporation by reason of being (1) citizens or residents of the United States, or (2) nonresident alien individuals to whom section 871 is applicable, or (3) foreign corporations if a beneficial interest therein is owned directly or indirectly by any shareholder specified in subparagraph (1) or (2) of this paragraph.

§ 1.533-1 Evidence of purpose to avoid income tax.

(a) *In general.* (1) The Commissioner's determination that a corporation was formed or availed of for the purpose of avoiding income tax with respect to shareholders is subject to disproof by competent evidence. Section 533(a) provides that the fact that earnings and profits of a corporation are permitted to accumulate beyond the reasonable needs of the business shall be determinative of the purpose to avoid the income tax with respect to shareholders unless the corporation, by the preponderance of the evidence, shall prove to the contrary. The burden of proving that earnings and profits have been permitted to accumulate beyond the reasonable needs of the business may be shifted to the Commissioner under section 534. See §§ 1.534-1 through